

REMARKS

Applicants express appreciation for the telephone interview conducted on May 31, 2005 by Examiner Quynh Nguyen with Applicants' representatives Samuel G. Campbell and D'Ann Naylor Rifai. During the interview, the Examiner indicated that Applicants should consider an additional reference, U.S. Patent No. 6,832,203, "Skills Based Contact Routing," having inventors Jose Villena et al. (hereinafter Villena) in amending the application. Applicants have addressed the teachings of Villena in the remarks below.

Applicants further express appreciation for the Examiner's consideration of Applicants' arguments presented in conjunction with the Request for Continuing Examination. Those arguments were considered to be moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.

Claims 1-41 are pending in the application. Claims 1-41 stand rejected. Claims 1, 5, 13, 17, 23, 27, and 33-41 have been amended. Claims 5, 17, and 27 have been amended to correct typographical errors. No new matter has been added.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1, 13 and 21 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1, 13, and 21 have been amended to address this rejection and are believed to be in condition for allowance.

Rejection of Claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1-41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,704,409 issued to Dilip, et al. (hereinafter Dilip). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Amended independent claim 1 now reads:

A method comprising:
maintaining real-time data for multi-channel communication queuing, wherein the maintaining comprises:
forming a list of agent data, wherein the agent data includes information regarding a corresponding status of an agent for each type of communication media the agent is authorized to access.

Amended independent claims 13 and 23 include substantially the same limitations.

Dilip does not teach “maintaining a corresponding status of an agent for each type of communication media the agent is authorized to access.” The Office Action states that “agents [are] grouped together based on type[s] of devices the agents may utilize as necessary for load balancing. This is the obvious (if not inherent) way to operate a customer service center.” (See Office Action dated February 24, 2005, page 3.) However, this statement, even if true (which Applicants do not concede), does not teach maintaining a corresponding status for each type of communication media the agent is authorized to access.

At best, Dilip describes an agent being available to process a new transaction. Dilip does not recognize that agents may work simultaneously on different work items using different communication media; instead, Dilip teaches a transaction controller that makes a choice between transactions in the agent’s queue based upon the priority of the transaction. (See Dilip, column 7, lines 41-54.) Only when the agent is considered to be

“available” does the agent receive a new transaction from the queue. (See *id.*).

Consequently, Dilip cannot be expected to teach or suggest tracking a status for an agent with reference to each communication media the agent is authorized to access.


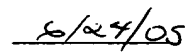
Similarly, Villena does not teach “maintaining a corresponding status of an agent for each type of communication media the agent is authorized to access.” Villena is concerned with matching the best available contact center agent with contacts requiring particular services. (See Villena, Abstract.) Villena suggests that contacts may be of any type, including inbound calls, outbound, e-mail, web chat, and videoconferencing. (See Villena, column 2, lines 56-60.) However, selecting an agent is described as traversing a list of skills required for a particular service from top to bottom and picking the first “idle available agent.” (See Villena, column 3, lines 32-35.) As with Dilip, Villena does not suggest maintaining a status for each communication media that the agent is authorized to access.

Therefore, independent claims 1, 13, and 23 are allowable over Dilip and Villena, either standing alone or in combination. Independent claims 1, its dependent claims 2-12 and 33-35, independent claim 13, its dependent claims 14-22 and 36-38, independent claim 23, and its dependent claims 24-32 and 39-41 are allowable for at least the foregoing reasons.

CONCLUSION

In view of the remarks set forth herein, the application is believed to be in condition for allowance and a notice to that effect is solicited. Nonetheless, should any issues remain that might be subject to resolution through a telephonic interview, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at 512-439-5086.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP AMENDMENT, COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS, P. O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on June 24, 2005.


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